UVA said it ended DEI, but staff records suggest the work continued under a new name

> **UVA official said DEI work would continue under new name; records show staff overlaps with former equity center.**

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UVA officials said diversity, equity, and inclusion work had ended, but archived records and current staff listings suggest much of that work continued under a different name.

An official comment raised new questions about the University of Virginia's DEI reforms. Archived records, overlapping staff rosters, and university webpages suggest substantial continuity between the former Equity Center and the current Center for Community Partnerships.

The University of Virginia's **Center for Community Partnerships** shares much of the same staff, leadership, programs, and institutional history as the university's former Equity Center, according to archived university records.

[RELATED: UVA lecture on 'institutional crisis' features bookseller tied to gender-equity activism]

The findings come after UVA Assistant Director Carissa Temerson was **recorded** saying university leadership advised staff to preserve DEI work by "changing the names but continuing the work." In the recording, Temerson reportedly identified the Center for Community Partnerships (CCP) as the office that succeeded the Equity Center.

Campus Reform compared an archived **2024 Equity Center staff directory** with the current CCP staff page and found that at least 16 of 18 listed employees appear in both organizations.

Among the employees appearing on both rosters are Executive Director Ben Allen, Michele Claibourn, Jess Harris, Sherica Jones-Lewis, Sarah Medley, Lucy Montalvo, Nina Schoonover, Sydney Shuler, and DeVon Christopher Wade.

Several positions also appear to have been renamed rather than eliminated. Claibourn, for example, previously served as **Director of Equitable Analysis** at the Equity Center and is now listed as **Director of Community-Centered Analysis** at CCP.

Campus Reform also found significant overlap among faculty leadership. **Barbara Brown Wilson**, **Nancy Deutsch**, and **Bonnie Gordon** all held leadership positions within the Equity Center and are currently listed as co-founders, advisors, or founding faculty leaders of CCP.

Additional records suggest continuity beyond personnel. The former Equity Center website, **virginiaequitycenter.org**, now redirects visitors to the Center for Community Partnerships website. Both organizations list the same address: 201 W. Main Street in Charlottesville.

Current CCP webpages also continue to reference Equity Center activities. On CCP's **COVID-19 Support page**, the university states that "The Equity Center used its resources to advocate for, and co-create with community partners, an equitable response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

The same page also states that "The Equity Center worked with a web of

community partners to provide wraparound services to individuals during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic."

The Equity Center was **established** in 2019 as the Center for the Redress of Inequity Through Community-Engaged Scholarship. According to a university announcement at the time, the center was created to address racial and socioeconomic inequities through community-engaged research and partnerships.

[RELATED: UVA continues identity-based graduation events despite DEI rollback]

In 2025, UVA **announced** the closure of its DEI office amid growing scrutiny of diversity, equity, and inclusion programs nationwide. However, archived records reviewed by *Campus Reform* suggest many of the Equity Center's personnel and programs continued operating under the CCP banner.

One fourth-year UVA student who requested anonymity criticized DEI initiatives broadly.

"I find DEI to be one of the most disgraceful aspects of modernity, and I feel it has greatly harmed higher education throughout the United States," the student told *Campus Reform*. "Society should prioritize excellence, whatever their race may be."

Campus Reform reached out to UVA Media Relations, Carissa Temerson, Ben Allen, Barbara Brown Wilson, Nancy Deutsch, and Bonnie Gordon for comment. This article will be updated accordingly.